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ABSTRACT

One of 52 theoretical papers on school crime and its relation to poverty, this chapter states that social scientists and others have argued that schools contribute to delinquency by their failure to prepare students properly for later life. It follows that the solution is better schools and better education. The author argues that schools make delinquents because of their success, not their failure. Under the present economic system, schools must prepare youth, especially of the lower classes, for alienated work and lives. Youth become "delinquents" when they try to reject this destiny. It follows that it is the society and economy that must change first, since they demand alienated labor, before schools can prepare people for liberated lives. (Author/MLF)

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SCHOOL, ALIENATION, AND DELINQUENCY

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ABSTRACT

Social scientists and others have argued that schools contribute to delinquency by their failure to prepare students properly for later life. It follows that the solution is better schools and better education. I argue that schools make delinquents because of their success, not their failure. Under the present economic system, schools must prepare youth, especially of the lower classes, for alienated work and lives. Youth become "delinquents" when they reject this destiny. It follows that it is the society and economy that must change first, since they demand alienated labor, before schools can prepare people for liberated lives.

The Real Functions of Education

"There is mounting evidence that delinquency and failure in school are correlated ... boys from blue-collar backgrounds who failed in school have been found to be delinquent seven times more often than those who did not fail" (Task Force on Juvenile Delinquency, 1967, p. 51). Many writers have used these and similar findings to argue that schools have contributed to delinquency by their failure to educate properly youth of all classes and races (e.g., Schafer & Polk, 1967). Schools are charged with failing to provide young people with opportunities for social mobility because of inadequate funding, the prejudices of their personnel, poor teacher training, and other shortcomings. Young people either drop out or get a poor education, thus becoming candidates for crime because of their feelings of inadequacy and frustration, poor preparation for jobs, etc.

In order to prevent the delinquency to which they contribute, schools are urged to improve their educational programs. They should provide everyone with a good education and prepare all students for their adult roles, especially work. This improved performance will be achieved by

spending more money, by training teachers to improve their skills and remove their prejudices, by making education generally more "relevant," by careful preparation of students for jobs they will hold as adults, and so on.

But even though some of these school reforms have been implemented in the ten years since they were made in 1967 by the Task Force on Juvenile Delinquency, delinquency rates continue to increase at an even faster pace, and scholars and government agencies continue to point to delinquency as a serious problem. LEAA and other government agencies are sponsoring and publicizing innovations in delinquency prevention in order to stem the tide (Baron & Feeney, 1976; Rutherford & McDermott, 1976; "University Sponsors," 1976).

I will argue that these critics of American education show a fundamental misunderstanding of its real functions and of the relationship between education and delinquency. Much recent historical and sociological research has shown that public education in the United States, from its very inception, was meant to keep most people in their place. Free public education was created, and later was made mandatory, to stabilize social conditions and perpetuate

inequalities. John Holt (1972) said it plainly:

> Schools and schooling, by their very nature, purposes, structure, and ways of working are, and are meant to be, an obstacle to poor kids, designed and built not to move them up in the world but to keep them at the bottom of it and to make them think it is their own fault. (p. 186)

Schools always have functioned to socialize most youth to limited lives and jobs, and many others to dead-end jobs and lives seen as failures. They have taught obedience, discipline, and rigidity to create people fit for the fates awaiting them. They have succeeded with most youth; many of the failures of the system are labeled "delinquents."

An implication of this argument, to be explored at the end, is that "the schools have succeeded well in their task, and ... it is society that is in need of radical change" (Feinberg & Rosemont, 1975, p. 12), not the schools alone.

In the sections that follow, I will develop this argument. First, I show in some detail how and why some schools have functioned to oppress most people, not to provide avenues of social mobility. Second, I try to show how schools and their oppression of most people

lead to delinquency. Third, I mention briefly another type of schools, reform schools, and their place in the further oppression of most of those labeled delinquents. Finally, I draw some conclusions and make some recommendations on the relationship between schools and delinquency.

The Rise and Working of Public Education

The work of Bowles (1972) and Bowles and Gintis (1976), among others, has shown that public education emerged in the United States to meet the needs of business and corporations, not to educate and enlighten people, and certainly not to provide opportunities for personal and social improvement. As industrialism expanded in the early 1800s, old ideologies and socializing processes making for allegiance to the established order began to crumble. A new tool was needed. The solution in most capitalist societies was the creation of mass, free public education, soon to become compulsory (Bowles, 1972, pp. 39-40).

Certainly, much of the teaching in the schools has focused on content and skills, but the larger concern has been with traits considered desirable by employers. Among these traits have been obedience, punctuality, rigidity,

willingness to do boring and repetitive tasks, and allegiance to work which alienates people by requiring the use of only their bodies, not their minds. In their essential features, schools copied the environment and organization of factories (Work in America, 1973, p. 141). Even today, when a high school diploma is irrelevant to the ability to perform many jobs, it is still required. "In the employer's mind, a high school graduate (as opposed to a dropout) will be more likely to show up daily, submit to orders, and not cause trouble" (Carnoy, 1972, p. 5).

"Jobs Are Not Big Enough for People"

Many books on work and worker alienation have been written over the last 20 years. The results of surveys are mixed, some showing pervasive discontent (Work in America, 1973), others (Nettler, 1976, ch. 9) concluding that most people are relatively happy with their work. But studies which involve long and personal talks with workers show that most of them are alienated from their jobs.

No study communicates better how people feel about their work, and what it does to them, than Terkel's Working (1974). Here we see the experiences and lives for which schools prepare people. Working-class jobs,

notably the assembly lines, are the most alienating; but white-collar jobs leave scars and damage the spirit because of the conformity they demand. Terkel's summary of the conversations he had is a devastating indictment:

> This book, being about work, is, by its very nature, about violence -- to the spirit as well as to the body. It is about ulcers as well as accidents, about shouting matches as well as fist-fights, about nervous breakdowns as well as kicking the dog around. It is, above all (or beneath all), about daily humiliations. To survive the day is triumph enough for the walking wounded among the great many of us....
>
> It is about a search, too, for daily meaning as well as daily bread, for recognition as well as cash, for astonishment rather than torpor; in short, for a sort of life rather than a Monday through Friday sort of dying. Perhaps immortality, too, is part of the quest. To be remembered was the wish, spoken and unspoken, of the heroes and heroines of this book....
>
> For the many, there is a hardly concealed discontent. The blue-collar blues is no more bitterly sung than the white-collar moan. "I'm a machine," says the spot-welder. "I'm caged," says the bankteller, and echoes the hotel clerk. "I'm a mule," says the steel-worker. "A monkey can do what I do," says the receptionist. "I'm less than a farm implement," says the migrant worker. "I'm an object," says the high-fashion model. Blue-collar and

> white call upon the identical phrase. "I'm a robot"...(pp. xiii-xiv)
>
> Nora Watson may have said it most succinctly. "I think most of us are looking for a calling, not a job. Most of us, like the assembly line worker, have jobs that are too small for our spirit. Jobs are not big enough for people."
>
> ...I was constantly astonished by the extraordinary dreams of ordinary people...(p. xxix)

Why do most jobs alienate and humiliate? Braverman (1974, especially ch. 4) has shown that work under industrial capitalism separates conception from execution. A few (the management) plan and organize what is to be done, and the rest of us do the physical detailed labor they plan. But our distinctly human existence demands that we use body and mind. Cobblers plan and make entire shoes, from beginning to end; people who run machines in shoe factories do exactly as others tell them, performing minute tasks, and their minds are only an obstacle to exact obedience to management orders. Moreover, as Braverman shows (ch. 15), many traditionally white-collar jobs are becoming increasingly like assembly line ones: people do nothing but open letters all day, others sort them, others type hundreds of standard replies, and so on. This whole process, planned by management to increase

productivity and cheapen labor by removing all skill and thought from the work, violates the workers' humanity and degrades them.

Given these realities, all talk about jobs as am important solution to delinquency (Committee on Education and Labor, 1974, pp. 119, 120) is a delusion. For in fact jobs are (a) limited (especially good jobs), (b) dead-end, (c) not paying enough for a secure life, and (d) destructive to body -- 115,000 Americans die annually from work accidents and diseases contracted at work (Levison, 1974; Stranahan, 1976) -- and mind.

Training for Obedience and Alienation

The preparation of most people for work that humiliates and mutilates the spirit has not been the work of some invisible hand. From the very origins of public education, it has been the conscious design of upper-class and business leaders.

Today people use euphemisms when they talk about this training for obedience and limited lives. Poverty programs trained young people for nonexistent jobs (Wellman, 1968). The Task Force on Juvenile Delinquency (1967) recommended that schools "review and revise present programs for students not going to college" and "further develop job placement services in schools" (p. 53).

The progressive movement in education has urged that education be realistic and relevant, related to the real world outside the classroom. But in the context of industrial capitalism all that such talk has meant has been preparation for the alienating jobs most people must hold (Feinberg & Rosemont, 1975, pp. 3-5).

Many of those who worked for the creation of mass public education were more direct and revealing in their comments on what they expected from the schools. A manufacturer wrote in 1941:

> I have never considered mere knowledge as the only advantage derived from a good Common School education.... (Workers with more education possess) a higher and better state of morals, are more orderly and respectful in their deportment, and are more ready to comply with the wholesome and necessary regulations of an establishment.... In times of agitation, on account of some changes in regulations or wages, I have always looked to the most intelligent, best educated and the most moral for support. (Katz, 1968, p. 88)

And, in 1880, Charles Francis Adams, Jr., said of the schools of his day:

> Most of you, indeed, cannot but have been part and parcel of one of those huge, mechanical educational machines,

> or mills, as they might more properly be called. They are, I believe, peculiar to our own time and country, and are so organized to combine as nearly as possible the principal characteristics of the cotton-mill and the railroad with those of the model state's prison. (Katz, 1968, p. 162)

The same interests, only even more obvious, motivated Southern industrialists who urged education for Black people. In the late nineteenth century, an Alabama iron manufacturer said of education for Blacks, "...if the labor was better educated I am satisfied our labor here would be much more reliable" (Anderson, 1975, p. 24). And William H. Baldwin said at an educational conference in 1899 that education is a means to get Black people to "willingly fill the more menial positions and do the heavy work, at less wages" than the white workers (Anderson, 1975, pp. 33-34).

Those were the sentiments of some leading businessmen and educators of the past, and of many of the present. But how do we know that in fact schools do teach these values? The writings of Henry (1963) and Friedenberg (1965), among others, have shown some of the ways in which obedience is taught. A more recent and more focused study (Wilcox & Moriarty, 1976) shows in detail

how schools socialize young people.

First, a distinction must be made. All people, including most people in higher management, must learn to do work that is alienating to their spirits and destructive of human relationships. But management people "probably are socialized so as to internalize authority and act without direct and continuous supervision to implement goals and objectives relatively alienated from their own personal needs" (Bowles & Gintis, 1976, p. 145). In their work, they have much autonomy within the context of the authority values they have internalized. Workers, on the other hand, must be taught to follow the external directions of others: they must become "reliable" and obedient workers (Bowles & Gintis, 1976, pp. 53-148; Wilcox and Moriarty, 1976, pp. 205-207).

In their study of two elementary schools, one of upper-middle-class students and the other of lower-middle-class ones, Wilcox and Moriarty show how people are trained to fit into the different jobs awaiting them. In the upper-middle-class school, students were taught to become autonomous in the context of internalizing certain values. "In an internal interaction, the teacher throws the responsibility back to the child to think and

shape activity in a manner that promotes or relies upon internalized values, self-images, standards or goals." Here are two examples of teacher comments: "Tommy, talk to yourself quietly and tell yourself where you are and what's expected of you." "You really goofed off. Why do you do this to yourself?" (p. 210).

At the lower-middle-class school, teachers use commands and orders. The teacher "treats the child as a person who is expected to follow certain standard rules, procedures or directions laid down by herself and made solvent by her authority and direct power." The following examples show clearly the direction of the socialization process: "You have a responsibility to get that paper done and I want it done now." "You have an assignment. Sit down and get busy" (pp. 208-209). Both groups of students are being socialized to do what is expected of them. Those headed for managerial positions will do it at their own direction, those destined for manual labor and clerical jobs will perform their work at the direction of others.

Thus, from the very beginning, schools have worked consistently to prepare most students for dead-end and deadening jobs. In addition, it has been imperative

that this process of preparing a few for high positions and limiting the lives of most people be seen as the objective result of the differing personal qualities and abilities of the students. Not only must students be taught obedience for their later jobs, but this socialization process must be strengthened by further discrimination.

The Uses of Testing

Thus, for the past 60 years, IQ and other tests have been used to convince people that their limited jobs and lives are a reflection of their lower abilities. The recent writings of Jensen (1969) and others which argue that intelligence (which is equated with IQ scores) is hereditary and is lower for certain groups represent only a more vicious form of the attack on working-class, poor, and minority people that has been common since the rise of public education.

There are two main responses to any argument that unequal scores of different groups on IQ and other tests reflect differences in abilities:

(a) The cultural and class bias of these tests has been demonstrated by many people (e.g., Gartner, Greer, & Riessman, 1973). Kagan (1973) describes the bias and

distortion of IQ tests:

> The Guatelmalan child I described earlier knows less than the American child about planes, computers, and fractions. However, he knows much more about how to make rope and tortillas, how to tell the weather from cloud formations, and how to burn an old milpa for the June planting. The American middle-class child knows how to play chess and scrabble, while the poor ghetto child knows how to play the "dozens" and dupe teachers and police. Each knows what is necessary for his life space. There are only a few dumb children in the world if you classify them from the perspective of the community of adaptation, but millions of dumb children if you classify them from the perspective of another society. (p. 130)

These "objective" tests have been used as evidence to justify the oppression of the lower class. But even the middle-class students who do well in them have been oppressed by such tests. For they measure no creativity or imagination in any child; rather, they foster routine and conforming thinking.

(b) Many studies have shown that, even if we take IQ tests at face value, the educational system has discriminated systematically against the children of the lower classes, and ability has not been the important factor in determining

who gets a good education (especially a college degree). Whether we talk of attending college (Bowles, 1972, p. 52), of graudating from college (Sewell & Shah, cited in Duberman, 1976, pp. 207-208), or of economic success in later life (Bowles & Gintis, 1973), we find that students with the same IQ, but from different classes, have vastly unequal opportunities and outcomes. For example, of those 1957 high school seniors who were at the top 25 percent IQ and the "low socioeconomic status level," 20.1 percent had graduated from college by 1964-65; but of those in the top 25 percent IQ and "high socio-economic status level," 64 percent had graduated from college by 1964-65 (Duberman, 1976). William Sewell (cited in Duberman, 1976, p. 210) summarizes these findings: "The selective influence of socioeconomic background ... operates independently of academic ability at every stage in the process of educational attainment."

Tracking, Finances, and so on

Nationally, schools have discriminated against the lower classes in additional ways. Tracking and counseling have been two means of directing students to jobs that follow their class backgrounds. Other means have included much greater per pupil expenditures for the upper classes (e.g., Sexton, 1961), types of programs available to

different classes, attitudes of teachers and administration toward different classes (see the classic study of Hollingshead, 1949, also 1976), and so on.

In these days of seemingly unlimited opportunities for all in public higher education, we must note that class discrimination continues there. It is evident in expenditures per student, in who goes to prestigious universities and who to the community college to become a technician, and so on. California is typical of the nation. In the 1960s, per student expenditures at the universities (where the upper classes attend) were 5,000 dollars; at the state colleges, 3,000 dollars; and at the community colleges, 1,000 dollars (Hanson & Weisbord, cited in Duberman, 1976, p. 213; see also Karabel, 1974).

It should be obvious from the attitudes and habits they teach, the tests they use to categorize students, the money they spend for each student, and so on, that schools have never been meant to educate most people for personal and social growth. They have been structured intentionally to perpetuate class inequalities and keep people in their places. At the same time, a few exceptionally talented and persistent poor people have been allowed to succeed, creating the illusion of social mobility. This illusion of opportunity has confused people; they have not realized

that what can work for a few cannot work for all, or most, people.

Ivar Berg (1969) may be logically correct in arguing "...on every occupational level Americans tend to overestimate the value of education, denying employment opportunities to those with less education and demanding more education than most jobs require" (as summarized by Duberman, 1976, p. 221). But if we see that higher education, especially degrees from prestigious universities, goes mostly to the higher classes, what Berg finds puzzling makes sense. It keeps the better jobs for those from the higher classes. In addition, as I have argued, more education shows the employers that their employees are "good" workers.

Schools and Delinquency

If schools have been created to train people for alienated work, and if they discriminate against the children of the lower classes by trying to convince them that their limited success is their own fault, why is there delinquency in schools? How do schools create delinquents? The answer is simple: no institution can be totally successful, especially in the long run, if it

is oppressing people. Schools are no different.

Early in their study, Bowles and Gintis (1976, p. 12) state: "The authoritarian classroom does produce docile workers (but, as Working shows, not so docile these days), but it also produces misfits and rebels." And Carnoy adds (1972, p. 4) that, if they ever did, "...youth no longer accept oppression and contradiction."

This rejection of oppression, traditionally by the lower classes but now also by the middle classes, takes many forms. Some students become openly political, but many more react in other ways: vandalism, theft, dropping out, and so on. The rebellion against the schools takes place both in the schools themselves and in the outside world.

Juvenile Delinquency and Delinquent Behavior

Schools contribute both to juvenile delinquency and to delinquent behavior. Juvenile delinquents are youth who commit legal offenses and get caught and processed by the juvenile justice system (police, courts, institutions). Delinquent behavior refers to all offenses, including the vast majority never detected or labeled by the juvenile justice system (Gold, 1970). Traditionally, most delinquents (caught and labeled youth) have come from the lower classes. But much recent research (Gold, 1970; Williams & Gold,

1972), using self-reports, has shown that the rates of delinquent behavior are equal in all classes.

These findings lead us to two conclusions. (a) At least at present, youth of middle and lower classes are rejecting the destinations schools plan for them. Even though middle-class jobs pay better, have more prestige, and are not harmful to the body, they do alienate spirit and mind. The rejection of these jobs (so obvious in Working) may not be conscious, but it becomes evident in the seemingly irrational behavior of so many students: drugs, open defiance of school personnel, undetected legal offenses (Chambliss, 1973), and so on.

(b) For working-class, poor, and minority youth, schools contribute to their delinquency both by the preparation for alienating work and by participating in the labeling of those who openly defy their destinies. School and the juvenile justice system come down harder on these boys and girls, for they harbor few illusions of success. Their defiant rejection of their destinies is a threat to the system. They must be labeled and seen as deviants, as dangerous people. "The Saints and the Roughnecks" (Chambliss, 1973) is an excellent account of this process and its effects on working-class boys. Two

groups of boys, one middle-class and the other working-class, engage in equally serious delinquent behavior. But the schools, the police, and the respectable community seem to notice only the Roughnecks, who get the label and all the destructive consequences which follow for most of them.[1]

Vandalism and Violence

Vandalism against schools is the most obvious form of rejection of what schools do to students. Government

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[1] I want to say a word about the vast majority of youth who either engage in transitory delinquent behavior but do not become official delinquents, or who never do commit offenses. Schools and the juvenile justice system consider them successful people. But our vision is limited and distorted if all we expect of people is law-abiding behavior. For our essential concern should be the quality of life most people lead. Working (Terkel, 1974) is populated by men and women who, at least outwardly, have accepted their fates and have settled down to the jobs our economy provides. But what kinds of lives do they lead; what does their work do to them? When Terkel listened to people talk about their buried feelings and aspirations, the wounds and hurts and discontent poured out. Those who "succeed" by accepting degrading work as necessary are as oppressed as those who "fail." The discontent, safely buried most of the time, does arise on some occasions. One man asked Terkel to replay their taped talk. In amazement he said, "I never realized I felt that way" (p. xxiii).

Everyone is happy that most working-class youth eventually get a job and settle down. They would like all youth to do the same. But what do these jobs do to them?

reports are reliable indicators of the problem and also reflect the concerns of the ruling class. So we read that "...violence and vandalism in the schools of our country have reached a level of crisis that demands immediate comprehensive review and legislative action" (Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 1975, p. 39). The report cites many figures on the rise in crime in schools, including the estimate that property damage in schools has increased from 200 million dollars in 1971 to 500 million dollars in 1974 (p. 6).

In another government report (Committee on Education and Labor, 1974, p. 46), the superintendent of the Los Angeles schools told the Committee that the Los Angeles school system was spending millions of dollars a year for a school security force, but it was still inadequate and they could use 100 more security people. When we read Katkins, Hyman, and Kramer's (1976) description of what goes on in schools, the need for such a massive security force becomes obvious:

> A considerable amount of delinquent behavior occurs in schools. Smoking in the boys' room, defiance of teachers and administrator, cheating, possession of illegal weapons, fighting, vandalism, alcohol and drug abuse, stealing, and truancy are frequently known to teachers, staff, and administrators. (p. 185)

The Senate Committee on the Judiciary (1975) reported that "there are indications that student violence and vandalism occur more often in larger urban secondary schools" (p. 5). To the degree that this statement is true, and does not reflect a bias in data collection, it indicates the greater oppression visited by schools upon the lower classes of our cities. But it seems that suburbs are not immune to vandalism: "Vandalism is striking white, middle-class schools of the suburbs with the same vengeance that has forced urban school systems to bar their windows, hire guards, and install blaring alarms" (Philadelphia Inquirer, cited in Katkin et al., 1976, p. 186). Why should those destined for success strike against the schools ensuring their success? I think it shows that middle-class students sense that the limited monetary success and prestige they achieve are bought at a high price to their minds and to the human relationships they create.

In addition, it may show the beginning of the realization that the quality of life under capitalism is declining for most of us.

The Senate report quoted, apparently approvingly, the following passage from "Urban School Crisis": "Perhaps

the most serious aspect of vandalism is the set of messages it conveys: that students look upon the school as alien territory, hostile to their ambitions and hopes; that the education the school is attempting to provide lacks meaningfullness; that students feel no pride in the edifices in which they spend most of their days" (Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 1975, pp. 7-8). The writer of the report misses the meaning of this conclusion by attributing vandalism mostly to students from the lower classes, and by not understanding that the violence is directed against the intended functions of schooling, not any failure to educate well.

Conclusion

Sociological writings on school and delinquency tend to ignore the real function of schooling and the alienation involved. Cavan and Ferdinand (1976) are typical. They say that delinquency is related to schools through "serious misconduct in and around schools; truancy..." (p. 255); and the idleness of dropouts. They write about truants: "Truancy per se does not lead to delinquency. But the high percentage of truants among delinquents probably indicates a tendency common to both, i.e., an inability to fit into an orderly, regulated pattern or

life" (p. 264). Schools are faulted for failing some ideal goals, not for the very things they really do.

It follows that the solutions proposed also fail to get at the root causes. Gibbons (1976, pp. 180-182) says there are two views on how schools may deal with delinquency. (a) This view sees schools as "viable and healthy." They should organize and use their resources to socialize predelinquents (Reckless & Dinitz, 1972, report on one such attempt which failed). (b) Schools cause delinquency because of their ineffectiveness, prejudice of their personnel, etc. But the recommendations of this view are the ones I have shown not to deal with the root causes of alienation and oppression.

My view is that there are no possible solutions <u>in</u> school so long as schools must prepare students for alienated work.

Reform Schools and Juvenile Justice

A brief look at reform schools and other programs and institutions for delinquents, from the 1820s to the present, provides further evidence that schools train for limited jobs and lives (for a more detailed account, see Liazos, 1974).

Most of these programs and institutions have focused on work skills and attitudes as central to the reformation of delinquents. An 1847 report on reform schools in Massachusetts argued that they should make their inmates "industrious, useful, and virtuous citizens" (in Katz, 1968, p. 185). The language has varied, but not the intent, which has remained constant to the present. The specific work children and youth have done while in the institutions, and the jobs for which they were trained, show that they were being socialized to be happy with dead-end jobs. (As schools have failed with many students, so have reform schools, producing high rates of recidivism, and perpetuating the search for still more innovative delinquency prevention programs.) These jobs have been mostly factory work, requiring limited skills, and always "realistic" in relation to the supposed limited abilities of the children. Maids, gas station attendants, farm workers, and so on are the successful graduates of the reform schools (Liazos, 1974, pp. 7-10, 13-14).

Katz (1968, pp. 186-187) points out that reform schools were the first compulsory schools in the United States, meant for those who would not avail themselves of free public education, who were "blind" to their best

interests. Eventually, public education became compulsory for all to ensure that everyone did see their best interests. But reform schools and other institutions and programs in juvenile justice have continued to grow as a second line of defense against those who remained unconvinced of the schools' version of their best interests. Juvenile justice has been a harsher system for the production of alienated work and life.

Blum and Smith (1972), after working with runaways from these reformatories, concluded:

> Reform schools often try to rehabilitate by training kids for socially accepted and useful jobs. But these kids already view the jobs in question -- as we would agree -- as dead-end occupations. For the most part these are working-class kids who are being trained to stay in working-class jobs. Their parents, neighbors, and schools are working-class, and these kids have found the life surrounding them oppressive and intolerable. They want out, and society tells them there is no way out. (p. 98)

Conclusions and Solutions

Any educational system functions to enhance and perpetuate the social order that created it. Schools cannot

be allowed for long to oppose and contradict that order and the groups, institutions, and values which created and control it.

I have tried to show that schools may prevent delinquency if they socialize people to fit into the society, and they cause it in those who reject that socialization. If the economy and society demand alienated labor and obedience to authority for most people, the schools will try to prepare them for such a life. Those students who refuse the precast mold and react with anger, resistance, and rebellion become "delinquents." The very refusal to fit <u>is</u> delinquency.

Therefore, schools are neither the primary cause of delinquency nor can they be the primary solution. In summarizing much recent literature, Schwendinger and Schwendinger (1976, pp. 189-190) show that neither more education (in years of school attended) nor better education (such as more qualified teachers) has made much difference in employment or income. The economy has had few decent jobs, or, worse, no jobs at all for many youth. In 1976, many black neighborhoods had unemployment rates of over 50 percent for young people (Pettigrew, 1976). If schools were to prepare youth for jobs that do not

exist, they would only add to the social dynamite. Truly liberating schools would create misfits for the present conditions, and the ruling groups and institutions cannot allow such a situation to arise, or, if it did arise, to continue.

Schools are dominated by, and do the work of, the corporate economy. We cannot focus on schools as the problem or the solution. Rather, we need to change the economy and the society, and the ruling groups which control them. We must create a true democracy where all people control all institutions.

In closing, I want to say a few words about such a new society, one of whose features would be the virtual elimination of crime, since the present economic, social, and psychic conditions leading to crime would not exist.

I want to stress that I do not think work, work training, and manual labor are inherently degrading and destructive. Organized differently, allowing all people to use their minds and release their creativity, work is beneficial to body and spirit. What causes alienation now, however, is (a) the limit on well-paying, decent jobs; (b) the creation and assignment of dead-end jobs to the lower classes; (c) the degradation attached to

manual labor; and (d) the alienation of most jobs because the work is planned and controlled by others.

Traditionally, the way out has been individual striving, allowing a few to escape from alienating lives and work, but condemning most to failure (Holt, 1972, pp. 184-185). We must understand that we have to work together to create a new society which will allow and encourage all of us to lead decent, full, and creative lives.

In addition to guaranteeing everyone a decent living, eliminating the pervasive competition now haunting us, limiting the accumulation of property and wealth, understanding that the quality of our lives depends as much on human relationships as on material possessions, etc., we must create true democracy in communities and workplaces. There must be genuine workers' control in each workplace; all work should be shared by all men and women; any task considered necessary for survival must be shared by everyone; and manual labor should be dignified by the respect it deserves and it should be shared by all.

Workers must cooperate and find ways to release everyone's creative potential. Part of that effort will be to find ways to reunite the conception and execution

of work. Such goals are not utopian. They are being struggled for in many societies, including the United States. China has made the greatest progress in creating workers' control and reuniting conception and execution (Bettelheim, 1974), showing us that these ideas are both a dream and a liberating reality.

Although such a society would eliminate most crime by abolishing the conditions behind crime and delinquency, some crime would persist. People do not need to rob, etc., when the essentials of life are guaranteed to everyone, work is enriching rather than alienating, and there is no more exploitation of the many by the few (this has happened in Cuba and China; see Baumann, 1976; Brady, 1966; Liazos, 1976).[2] But institutions, practices, motives, and human relationships which have existed for centuries do not disappear overnight. They arose and were perpetuated to serve the interests of those controlling the society. Like all institutions in

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[2] During 1975-1976 John Baumann, Jim Brady, Richard Quinney, Richard Speiglman, and myself (the Popular Justice Research Group) studied and explored the theory and practice of popular justice. We plan to present our work in a forthcoming book. I want to express my gratitude to everyone in the group for the comradely struggle and political growth we shared. My thinking, writing, and work have been, and will continue to be, profoundly shaped by our work and struggle.

capitalist society, the criminal justice system serves the interests of the ruling classes. Socialist societies must create new institutions to struggle against the old practices and motives and to serve the needs of all the people.

People in socialist societies must engage in a long struggle to eliminate judges, experts, and bureaucrats, and create a true popular justice run by people in their own neighborhoods. Justice and rehabilitation of offenders become the work of everyone because everyone is part of the community. Popular justice is laws written in plain language; concern for the reasons people endanger the community, not with technicalities; and rehabilitation and help for all who want it.

This is a bare outline. Elsewhere (Brady, 1976; Baumann, 1976; Liazos, 1976) we have provided a more detailed description of popular justice. But we must remember that popular justice is possible only within a socialist struggle, where cooperation replaces competition, serving the common good becomes people's primary motive, and there is no more exploitation and oppression.

Liberating, instead of alienating, education also can only be possible within a socialist struggle. The transformation is not automatic. There must be a long

general struggle if we are to eliminate authoritarian relationships in our lives. Education is no exception. The obedience and tracking now characteristic of schools is unnecessary in a classless society, but old practices must be struggled against. The success of such a struggle, however, is possible only where work is freeing and creative. Education will become a liberating experience for all people, not a priviledged diploma for a few.

Students who are not being socialized for alienated work, who experience growth and learning which enrich their lives, will not vandalize or commit other offenses.

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